C!N
1073
Countdown

after the Flash death. We had to wait for Kyle Rayner to come free from a moment in Sinestro Corps. By doing so, it slowed down the opening sequences of ***Countdown,*** and I think it hurt the series as it was just coming out of the gate. We didn't have that full head of steam—we didn't get into the major meat of the stories, and we didn't get into the full direction of the series until later on down the line.

"Just like with everything, you're not going to have a 100% success record – especially when you're doing what we do, where we're putting out somewhere between sixty and sixty-five books on a monthly basis. So, in that case, you're just not going to be able to do it without making a mistake here or there. The problem is that when you have something as prominently displayed as a ***Countdown*** or some of our key titles running late or skipping months – those glaring missteps become much more the lightning rod and seem to be indicative of the entire line, which is not the case.

"I'm happy to say that by the time that we hit the halfway mark, I felt that we'd made all the corrections necessary for that series, and I feel that the book is on track for where it should be right now."

DiDio is most proud of one of DC's biggest successes of 2007. "You could say that we went too wide with ***Countdown,*** but went just the right size with ***Sinestro Corps War***. ***Sinestro*** is actually the perfect example of how an event takes place now – it crosses across several books, drives a huge and important story for the line, and more importantly, you feel that the story has serious ramifications on the series and the story will not only be important to what's going on right now, but also to the

The View from the Center of the Universe

If there's one man who has a bird's eye view of the whole DC Universe, it's DCU Executive Editor *Dan DiDio*. DiDio has guided DC through several major events, including ***Identity Crisis, Infinite Crisis, 52,*** and ***Countdown...*** and later this year, he'll guide readers into the heart of the DCU with ***Final Crisis.*** Recently, he took time from his busy schedule to look back at 2007—and forward at 2008 and beyond.

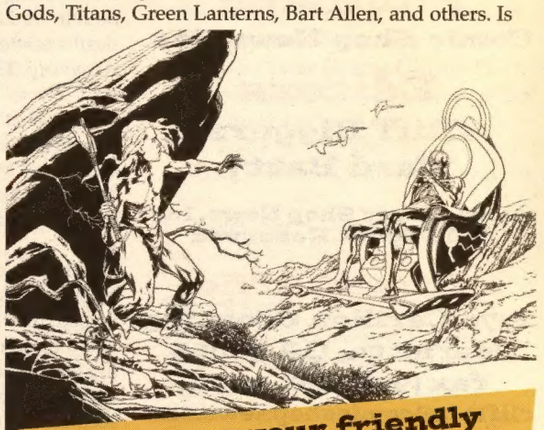
DiDio agrees that, for DC, "2007 was a challenging year, and it was a bit of a transition year in regards to stories and setting up teams, and directions for our characters. It was challenging in the sense that we tried to really pull together so many aspects of the DC Universe to make it much more cohesive in regards to its storytelling and continuity, and we found that by doing so, it strained all of our systems and in some ways inhibited the stories that we were telling, so we made a course correction during the year, and I feel that we've got the wind to our back right now, and we're going to roll into 2008 with a full head of steam."

Is it fair to say that ***Countdown,*** the book he had said last year would be the "spine" of the DCU for 2007, didn't start off as successfully as he'd hoped? "Exactly—what happened with ***Countdown,*** in trying to line up the universe, we ended up pacing our stories across the titles of the DC Universe, and didn't allow each story to follow its own, natural pace in its own book. Meaning that, ***Countdown*** slowed down, because we had to wait for the Rogues to come free

future of the character in the DC Universe. It has to feel like a natural progression of what was going on in the series to begin with... Honestly, it's the best thing that we produced this year. Without a doubt."

Is it safe to say that, thanks to its success, ***Sinestro Corps War*** is the model that DC will use for future events? "Yes," DiDio said. "***Sinestro Corps*** is a very strong model for us for 2008 and on."

2007 was a year for deaths in the DCU—the New Gods, Titans, Green Lanterns, Bart Allen, and others. Is



Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

death being overused as a story element? "We have 52 universes with earths full of heroes. Therefore there will be stories that have to take place on some of those worlds that their point is to move the story forward to ***Final Crisis***. Because of that, there are events that take place on those worlds. Once of our goals is to create investment in those characters so that we know that people will care if we make a change or the character dies. It's similar to what *Marv Wolfman* did with ***New Teen Titans*** —create and introduce new characters and sometimes characters are even created to die... Death is a possible consequence of what our characters do, and we're telling a lot of stories right now, both in number and in breadth. Will these deaths matter to the future of the DCU? *Absolutely*. There are a lot of things going on.

"I think it's kind of funny – a lot of people are talking about death, and what did we see at the end of ***Green Lantern #25*** in the tease? ***The Blackest Night***—and the key words in that tease: 'the dead will rise.'

"There *is* a plan. There always has been a plan. It has been altered, twisted, turned, but there is a direction, a focus, and a reason for the way things are playing out in the DC Universe. If something occurred over a particular time that seemed to concentrate a particular 'flavor'–in this case, death, then that is a mistake on our part to oversell it in a short window. But there is a reason for everything, there is a purpose for the story, and it ultimately goes to a better, bigger story at the end of the day which I think people will react incredibly positively to. I hope, at least.

"Nothing is done haphazardly or done just to be gratuitous. The volume has been turned up for a reason. The panic that's starting to permeate throughout the DCU is there for a reason. We are building to something called ***Final Crisis***. There are spikes in the story as it moves forward, with endings and beginnings as we continue along. We tell periodical stories with continuing, larger stories interwoven throughout. Some of the characters live, some of them die, some return from the dead...

"Are characters dying more than before? Characters have been dying and 'dying' for decades in comics. How many times did Dr. Doom 'die'? How many times did we think that the Joker was dead? Death and the presumption of death are elements of dramatic storytelling. Yes, we've raised the volume—but again, we've done it for a reason. Hopefully, people will understand as they see it unfold, that there has been a method to the madness all along."

Looking ahead further into 2008—the end of ***Countdown to Final Crisis*** is approaching, and after that comes the big event itself. What can be said about ***Final Crisis*** at this point? "We're in the process right now of putting together a ***Final Crisis Sketchbook*** that we want to get out there to show the effort and the attention to detail that both *J.G. Jones* and *Grant Morrison* have put into the building of this series. We're also adding a bridge in a sense. Countdown ends with #1, and the #0 issue is actually going to be called ***Final Crisis #0***. Grant and *Geoff Johns* will be involved with that issue."

Will ***Final Crisis*** be another mega-event with spinoffs, crossovers, and plot threads spreading throughout the DCU? "No," DiDio said. "***Final Crisis*** is seven issues over eight months. It has a natural break built in between two of the issues. During that natural break, there will be a series of specials dealing with ***Final Crisis*** and the events of that natural break in the story.

"There will also be two other supporting series for ***Final Crisis***: one of them is a five part story, one of them is a six part story. That is the full extent of ***Final Crisis***. So we will not see ***Final Crisis*** crossing over in any appreciable manner with the rest of the line. All of the other monthly books will continue on the stories they're telling, with their established creative teams for those series...

"At this point, there are no plans to extend ***Final Crisis*** past that initial conceit, because we feel that what we have planned covers all the major story elements for that storyline. If we have to go any wider, when we will create a special, but we will not incorporate any of the ***Final Crisis*** storyline beats in any of the monthly series...

"We feel we've come up with the best way to tell the story, and it's not necessary to cross it over with any other series. The beats that are in ***Final Crisis*** right now are essential to ***Final Crisis,*** and they touch upon every single character in the DCU. As Grant says, it goes from the first boy on earth, Anthro, to the last boy on earth, Kamandi. But – that story works best in the format and the series that we're telling it in."

DiDio is very enthused about the work that the ***Final Crisis*** creators are doing. "Simply put, they're the best ones for the story. It is Grant's story, and Grant is such an incredible talent in his storytelling, and his abilities are so unique in how he tells stories – in fact, we so want this story to achieve its full potential, and that's one of the reasons why we're keeping it as tight as possible. Grant has a particular style and vision that's essential to executing this story properly."

The title of the series is ***Final Crisis***—but when one considers how many crises have arisen in the DCU, it's only logical to wonder just how final a crisis this is. "We wouldn't call it ***Final Crisis*** if we didn't mean it," DiDio said. As to just why it's so final, "That's a more 2009 question than a 2008 question—***Final Crisis #7*** comes out in December of 2008, so let's defer this question until out talk next year at this time."

Obviously DiDio has some long-range plans for the DCU. "Right – we're not just looking at 2008 right now, we're looking at 2009 and 2010 as well. A lot of what's going on will be built on, explored and examined in the coming months and years. The goal is to continue to push the storytelling with the whole universe."

by Matt Brady & newsarama.com (with Cliff Biggers)

Publisher
Comic Shop News, Inc.

Editors
Cliff Biggers
Ward Batty

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Editorial Office
2770 Carillon Crossing
Marietta, GA 30066
fax (928) 441-5990
cliffbig@comicshopnews.com

Business Office
3577-A Chamblee-Tucker Rd. #215
Atlanta, GA 30341
(770) 939-1364
fax (678) 669-1525
wbatty@csnsider.com
www.csnsider.com

Comic Shop Newsarama

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DC Books 'Em

DC has released their collected editions list for May, June and July of this year, and it's quite an impressive array of titles. Here's the list, broken down by imprint:

DC

•***52 Aftermath: The Four Horsemen TP,*** collecting the six issue limited series *(May)*

•***All-New Atom: The Hunt for Ray Palmer TP,*** collecting ***All-New Atom #s 12-16*** *(May)*

•***All Star Batman & Robin, The Boy Wonder Volume One HC,*** collecting *Frank Miller & Jim Lee's* ***ASB&R #s 1-9*** *(June)*

•***Batman & Son TP,*** collecting the *Grant Morrison-Andy Kubert* arc *(July)*

•***Batman: Faces TP,*** collecting the *Matt Wagner* series *(July)*

•***Batman: Going Sane TP,*** collecting the *J.M.DeMatteis* story arc

•***Batman: Jekyll & Hyde TP,*** collecting the six-issue miniseries *(June)*

•***Batman Vs. Two-Face TP,*** a 192-page volume featuring Two-Face tales from the Golden Age to the modern era *(May)*

•***Batman: The Joker's Last Laugh TP,*** collecting the limited series by *Chuck Dixon, Scott Beatty,* and others *(May)*

•***Batman: The Resurrection of Ra's al Ghul HC,*** a hefty 256-page volume collecting ***Batman Annual #26, Robin Annual #7, Batman #s 670-671, Detective #s 838-839, Nightwing #s 138-139,*** and ***Robin #s 168-169*** *(May)*

•***Black Adam: The Dark Age TP,*** collecting the six-part miniseries *(May)*

•***Booster Gold: 52 Pick-Up HC,*** collecting ***Booster Gold #s 1-6*** *(May)*

•***Checkmate Volume Three: The Fall of The Wall,*** collecting ***Checkmate #s 16-22*** *(May)*

•***Countdown: Arena TP,*** collecting the four-part miniseries *(July)*

•***Countdown Presents the Search for Ray Palmer TP,*** collecting the five multiverse-spanning oneshots *(June)*

•***Countdown to Adventure TP,*** collecting the miniseries *(July)*

•***Countdown to Final Crisis Volume One TP,*** collecting ***Countdown to Final Crisis #s 51-39*** *(May)*

•***Countdown to Final Crisis Volume Two TP,*** collecting ***Final Crisis #s 38-26*** *(July)*

•***Diana Prince: Wonder Woman Volume Two,*** collecting more *Mike Sekowsky* mod-Wonder Woman tales from the early 1970s *(July)*

•***The Doom Patrol Archives Volume Five HC,*** collecting ***Doom Patrol #s 114-121,*** the final issues of the Silver Age run *(June)*

•***The Flash: The Wild Wests HC,*** collecting the first story arc focusing on Wally West's return *(July)*

•***Green Lantern: No Fear TP,*** collecting ***Green Lantern #s 1-6*** (previously available in hardcover) *(May)*

•***Green Lantern: The Sinestro Corps War Volume Two HC,*** collecting ***Green Lantern #s 24-25*** and ***Green Lantern Corps #s 16-19*** *(June)*

•***Green Lantern Corps: Tales of the Sinestro Corps HC,*** collecting the ***Ion, Parallax, Cyborg Superman,*** and ***Superman Prime*** oneshots, ***Green Lantern Corps Secret Files,*** and backup stories from ***Green Lantern #s 18-20*** and ***Green Lantern: Sinestro Corps Special #1*** *(June)*

•***Infinity Inc Volume One: Luthor's Monsters TP,*** collecting the five-issue miniseries *(May)*

•***Jack Kirby's OMAC HC,*** collecting ***OMAC #s 1-8*** and material from ***Who's Who #13*** *(May)*

•***The Joker: The Greatest Joker Stories Ever Told TP,*** collecting 192 pages of Joker stories from the Golden Age to the contemporary era *(June)*

•***Justice Volume One TP,*** collecting *Alex Ross, Jim Krueger, & Doug Braithwaite's* ***Justice #s 1-4*** *(May)*

•***Justice League International Volume Two TP,*** collecting a heaping helping of the *Keith Giffen-J.M.DeMatteis* run from the 1980s *(July)*

•***The Justice League of America: The Injustice League HC,*** collecting ***Justice League of America Wedding Special #1*** and ***Justice League of America #s 13-16*** *(June)*

•***The Legion of Super-Heroes: 1050 Years of the Future TP,*** collecting 224 pages of classic Legion tales from their first appearance in ***Adventure #247*** to the contemporary era *(May)*

•***Metamorpho Year One TP,*** collecting the six-issue miniseries *(June)*

•***The Question: The Five Lessons of Blood HC,*** collecting ***The Crime Bible #s 1-5*** *(June)*

•***Shadowpact Volume Three: Darkness & Light TP,*** collecting ***Shadowpact #s 14-19*** *(June)*

•***The Seven Soldiers of Victory Archives Volume Three HC,*** collecting ***Leading Comics #s 9-14*** *(May)*

•***Showcase Presents Batman Volume Three,*** presenting Batman tales from ***Detective #s 359-375*** and ***Batman #s 189-192, 194-197, & 199-202*** (the missing issues were 80-Page Giant reprint issues) *(June)*

•***Showcase Presents the Flash Volume Two TP,*** collecting the Silver Age ***Flash #s 120-140*** *(June)*

•***Showcase Presents Green Lantern Volume Three TP,*** collecting Silver Age ***Green Lantern #s 39-59*** *(May)*

•***Showcase Presents The Haunted Tank Volume Two TP,*** collecting another heaping helping of tales of the ghost-guided Stuart Tank from ***GI Combat #s 120-127*** *(May)*

•***Showcase Presents Hawkman Volume Two T,*** collecting 560 pages of Hawkman adventures by *Gardner Fox, Murphy Anderson,* and others *(July)*

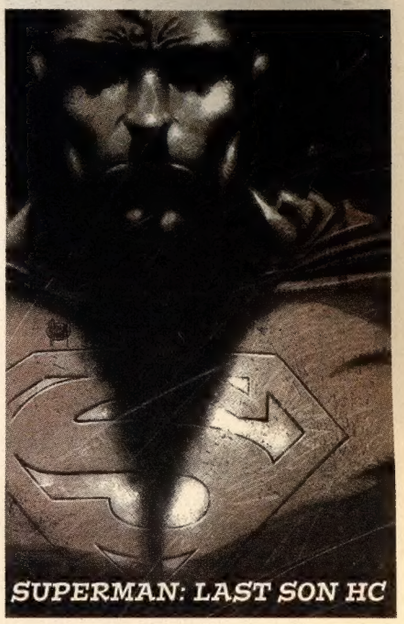
•***Showcase Presents House of Secrets Volume One,*** featuring 544 pages of weird adventures (including the first Swamp Thing appearance by *Len Wein & Bernie Wrightson*) *(July)*

•***The Starman Omnibus Volume One HC,*** collecting *James Robinson & Tony Harris's* ***Starman #s 0-16*** *(May)*

•***Superman & the Legion of Super-Heroes HC,*** collecting the best-selling arc by *Geoff Johns & Gary Frank* *(July)*

•***Superman: Camelot Falls Volume One TP,*** collecting ***Superman #s 654-658*** *(June)*

•***Superman: Escape from Bizarro World HC,*** collecting the *Geoff Johns-Richard-Donner-Eric Powell* story arc along with select Bizarro bonus tales *(May)*



•***Superman: Last Son HC,*** collecting ***Action Comics #s 844-846 & Annual #11*** *(June)*

•***Superman: World of Krypton TP,*** collecting ***World of Krypton #s 1-4*** plus a hefty stack of Krypton-focused tales *(May)*

•***Tangent Comics Volume Three TP,*** collecting the Tangent takes on Superman, Wonder Woman, Joker, JLA, Green Lantern, Power Girl, Nightwing, Nightforce, and the Flash *(June)*

•***Teen Titans: Titans of Tomorrow TP,*** collecting ***Teen Titans #s 50-54*** *(June)*

•***World's Finest Deluxe Edition HC,*** collecting *Dave Gibbons, Steve Rude, & Karl Kesel's* three-part miniseries *(June)*

•***The Trials of Shazam Volume Two TP,*** collecting the final half of the maxiseries *(July)*

•***Wonder Girl: Champion TP,*** collecting the miniseries *(July)*

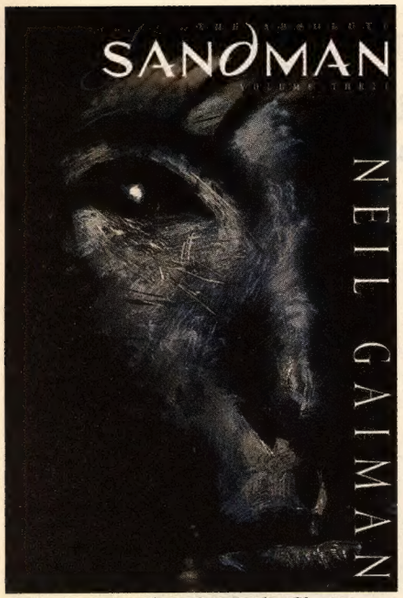
Vertigo

•***The Absolute Sandman Volume Three HC,*** collecting ***Sandman #s 40-56, Sandman Special #1, The Endless Gallery #1,*** and stories from ***Vertigo Preview #1*** and ***Vertigo: Winter's Edge #3*** *(May)*

•***American Virgin Volume Four: Around the World TP,*** collecting the final issues of the quirky *Steven T. Seagle-Becky Cloonan* series *(July)*

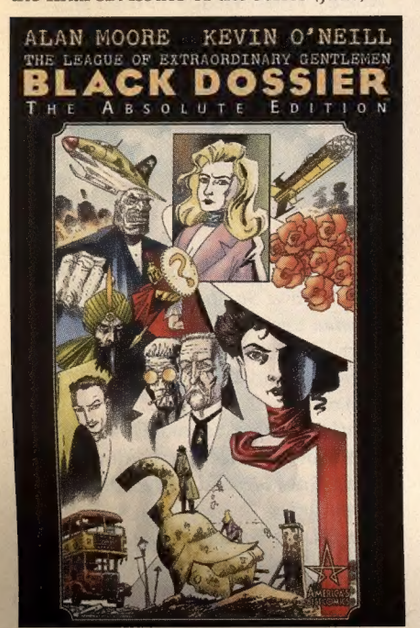
•***Army@Love Volume Two: Generation Pwned TP,*** collecting the second arc by *Rick Veitch & Gary Erskine* *(July)*

•***Demo TP,*** collecting the twelve-part



series by *Brian Wood & Becky Cloonan (June)*

- ***DMZ Volume Five: Hidden War TP,*** collecting five more issues of the *Brian Wood* series *(July)*
- ***Fables Volume Ten: The Good Prince TP,*** collecting ***Fables #s 60-69*** *(May)*
- ***Loveless Volume Three: Blackwater Falls TP,*** collecting ***Loveless #s 13-21*** *(May)*
- ***John Constantine, Hellblazer: The Fear Machine TP,*** collecting ***Hellblazer #s 14-22*** *(June)*
- ***Jack of Fables Volume Three: The Bad Prince TP,*** collecting ***Jack of Fables #s 12-16*** *(June)*
- ***Vertigo First Cut TP,*** collecting the first issues of ***DMZ, Army @Love, Exterminators, Jack of Fables, Crossing Midnight, Loveless,*** and ***Scalped*** in a bargain-priced edition *(May)*
- ***The Vinyl Underground Volume One: Snogging for England TP,*** collecting ***Vinyl Underground #s 1-5*** *(June)*
- ***Y—The Last Man Volume Ten: Whys and Wherefores,*** collecting ***Y #s 55-60,*** the final six issues of the series *(June)*



Minx

- ***Burnout,*** by *Rebecca Donner & Inaki Miranda (May)*
- ***Janes in Love*** by *Cecil Castellucci & Jim Rugg,* a sequel to the Minx kickoff graphic novel ***Plain Janes*** *(July)*
- ***The New York Four,*** by *Brian Wood & Ryan Kelly (June)*
- ***Water Baby,*** by *Ross Campbell (May)*

WildStorm

- ***Astro City: The Dark Ages Volume One,*** collecting the acclaimed series by *Kurt Busiek & Brent Anderson (July)*
- ***The Authority: Prime,*** collecting the first arc by *Christos Gage & Darick Robertson (July)*
- ***Ex Machina Deluxe Edition Volume One HC,*** collecting ***Ex Machina #s 1-11*** *(June)*
- ***Heroes TP,*** a softcover edition of the hit compilation of online comics, production art, and more *(May)*
- ***The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen: Black Dossier—The Absolute Edition,*** featuring an oversized, slipcased, expanded edition of the graphic novel by *Alan Moore & Eddie Campbell (June)*
- ***The Programme Volume One TP,*** collecting ***The Programme #s 1-6*** *(June)*
- ***Tom Strong Book Six TP,*** collecting ***Tom Strong #s 31-36*** *(May)*
- ***Welcome to Tranquility Volume Two TP,*** collecting ***Welcome to Tranquility #s 7-12*** *(May)*
- ***WildStorm: Revelations TP,*** collecting the limited series by *Scott Beatty, Christos Gage, & Wes Craig (July)*
- ***World of Warcraft Volume One HC,*** collecting the first six issues of the series *(July)*

Coming Comics—Dark Horse in March

Boba Fett is the latest Kotobukiya vinyl model offering, kicking off a line of statues featuring six popular ***Star Wars*** bounty hunters. Following Boba Fett's release are Dengar, 4-LOM, Zuckass, Bossk, and IG-88. Each of the Bounty Hunters will come with a special bonus part—collect all six bounty hunters and create a $100 full-size Darth Vader statue from the bonus parts!

Buffy television series writer *Drew Goddard* assumes the storytelling honors with ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer #12,*** kicking off the four-part "Wolves at the Gate." The gang (yep, Dawn too) travels to Tokyo where they duel vampires with unusual, yet strangely familiar, powers.

Conan comes to an end with the fiftieth issue, an extra-length book that wraps up *Timothy Truman & Tomas Giorello's* adaptation of *Robert E. Howard's* "The Hand of Nergal"... but don't fret, 'cuz there's another Conan series, ***Conan the Cimmerian,*** waiting in the wings, and it launches in June!

Hellboy: The Companion is a definitive guide to the Hellboy Universe, including a timeline mapping out the events in over a decade's worth of comics and novels—and several millennia of in-comic continuity! From the hidden history of Abe Sapien to the secret origin of the world, this complete compendium is every hardcore Hellboy fan's key to the mind of *Mike Mignola,*

and the ultimate introduction for anyone looking to begin their journey in the weird and wondrous world he has created.

Dark Horse adapts this spring's new Indy film in the 96-page ***Indiana Jones & the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull TP.***

Sculptor *William Paquet* launches his new ***Paquet's Cabinet of Curiosities*** line with two horrifying busts: ***The Monster*** and ***The Bride,*** depicting new visions of old horrors as designed, sculpted and painted by Paquet.

Roald Dahl's all-ages creation is the inspiration for the new *Mike Richardson-Dean Yeagle* miniseries ***The Return of the Gremlins,*** in which a man hoping to sell an inherited house discovers that it has some surprising occupants.

The work of animator *Shinichiro Watanabe* is the inspiration for the ***Samurai Champloo Mini-Bust #1: Mugen,*** the first of three busts in the series.

Joss Whedon returns to the world of his film ***Serenity*** with the three-part ***Serenity: Better Days*** miniseries, co-written by Whedon & *Brett Matthews* with art by *Will Conrad.* This tale revisits everyone's favorite space cowboys, with Mal and his crew on a heist that promises a big payoff—and what's surprising is that this heist just might make good on that promise.

Vector, the millennium-spanning crossover series, continues in ***Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic #27.*** An ancient evil gains long-coveted power in the third part of 2008's biggest Star Wars event!

Dark Horse collected editions include:

- ***BPRD Volume Eight: Killing Ground,*** collecting the miniseries by *John Arcudi, Mike Mignola, & Guy Davis;*
- ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer Omnibus Volume Four TP,*** collecting ***Buffy #s 9-11, 13-15, & 17-20, Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Bad Dog, Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Spike & Dru, Who Made Who,*** and ***Buffy the Vampire Slayer/Angel: The Hollower;***
- ***Conan: Born on the Battlefield HC,*** collecting *Kurt Busiek-Greg Ruth* tales from ***Conan;***
- ***Conan Volume Five: Rogues in the House HC,*** collecting ***Conan #s 37, 38, & 41-44;***
- ***Hellboy Volume Eight: Darkness Calls TP,*** collecting the six-issue miniseries along with two new epilogues—one drawn by *Mike Mignola,* the other by *Duncan Fegredo*—and an extensive sketchbook section from both artists;
- ***The Savage Sword of Conan Volume Three TP,*** a 544-page black-and-white compendium of tales from Marvel's black-and-white ***Savage Sword #s 25-31;***
- ***Star Wars: Clone Wars Photo Comic,*** a fumetti-adaptation of the animated series;
- ***Tales of the Fear Agent TP,*** a collection of action-packed, 1950's-style Sci-Fi and Horror told with a modern edge;
- ***The Terminator Omnibus Volume Two TP,*** collecting several hundred pages of Dark Horse ***Terminator*** tales in one hefty volume; and
- ***X Omnibus Volume One TP,*** collecting ***X #s 1-11, X: One Shot to the Head,*** "Welcome to the Jungle" from ***Dark Horse Comics #s 19 & 20,*** and ***X: Hero Illustrated Special #s 1 & 2.***

Coming Comics—Image in March

Joseph Michael Linsner & Eva Hopkins reveal the downside to having one's dreams come true in ***Dark Ivory,*** a four-issue miniseries that follows a teenage goth girl named Ivory who thinks her dream is abut to come true as she crosses paths with the vampire Esque. Her curiosity regarding his lifestyle leads her to the streets of New York, where she learns the price of getting too close to her dreams...

Rob Levin & Michael Broussard take a look at a member of Jackie Estacado's supporting cast in ***The Darkness: Butcher,*** a spinoff oneshot that explores the life of the man who cleans up the messes that Jackie Estacado and the Franchetti crime family continually leave in their wake.

Antony Johnston & Ben Templesmith have some ***Dead Space*** to fill—about six issues' worth, in fact. This miniseries, inspired by the upcoming Electronic Arts survival horror game, tells the gut-wrenching tale of a deep space mining colony that unexpectedly pulls an ancient and vicious alien life force from the dark rock.

Jay Faerber and a team of artists present "untold tales" of Dynamo 5's past in ***Dynamo 5 Annual #1.*** See their first adventure as a team; learn what happens when a reporter tries to reveal their connection to Captain Dynamo; see the good Captain in action with other Image heroes; and enjoy a reprinting of Captain Dynamo's first appearance from ***Noble Causes: Extended Family #2.***

You only *thought* ***First Born*** was over! Coinciding with the release of the ***First Born*** collected edition, a pair of all-star creative teams joins forces for two continuation tales in ***First Born: Aftermath,*** a oneshot featuring work by *Ron Marz, Stjepan Sejic, Phil Hester, & Ryan Sook.*

Larry Fessenden, Robert Leaver, & Brahm Revel adapt the eco-horror film starring *Ron Perlman* in ***The Last Winter OGN.*** It all begins with an oil company's advance team as they struggle to establish a drilling base in the Arctic that will forever alter the pristine land of Northern Alaska. After one team member is found dead, a mania slowly claims the sanity of the others as each of them succumbs to a mysterious fear...

What's worse than being a super-villain in Los Angeles County? Being their parole officer, of course! Meet Nixon Cooper and his colorful cast of parolees at large, hanging on by their fingernails in the morally ambiguous underbelly of L.A., in *Joe Casey & Chris Burnham's* ***Nixon's Pals.***

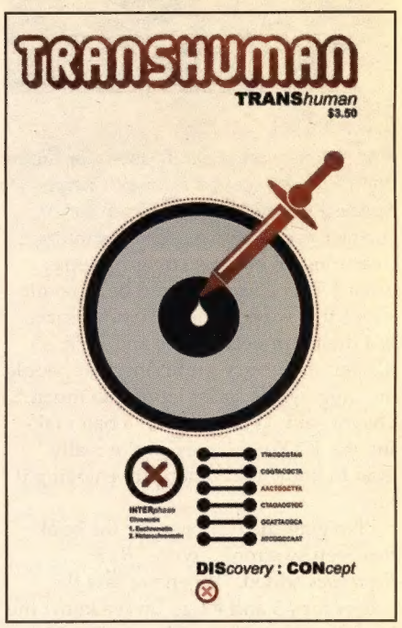
Jump ahead five years after the events of the prior issue in ***Noble Causes #32*** as *Jay Faerber & Yildiray Cinar* follow Doc Noble and the family, rededicated to the superheroic cause—but even as they take a more pro-active approach to fighting crime on a global scale, they still harbor dark secrets and hidden agendas.

Jim Mahfood presents a 96-page collection of his comic strips originally published in the weekly ***Phoenix New Times*** in ***Stupid Comics: Phoenix Edition.***

The lawless in Sapphire City are about to come face-to-face with fear as a man long thought buried, the ghoulish gunslinger "The Revenant" returns to enact vengeance on those who would prey on the innocent! *Rob Worley, Shannon Eric Denton, & Keith Giffen* follow this gunslinger on his quest in ***The Revenant,*** a three issue limited series.

Where have the old Hollywood monsters gone? In the age of computer graphics and green screen, the answer ain't pretty. Having lost all of his money in a dot-com scheme, Frankenstein's Monster is content to drink the days away. When a chance at work drops in his lap, can he sober up long enough to cash in? Find out in *Harold Sipe & Hector Casanova's* ***Screamland.***

Jonathan Hickman & J.M. Ringuet offer a mockumentary look at superhero genetic engineering in ***Transhuman,*** a four-issue limited series.



Top Cow's flagship title gets a creative renovation as the ***First Born*** creative team of *Ron Marz & Stjepan Sejic* begin their run with ***Witchblade #116***—and both creators have committed to the title until at least issue #150! This issue provides a perfect jumping-on point for new readers, as Sara Pezzini and Dani Baptiste begin a new chapter

as joint bearers of the Witchblade.

Image collected editions include:

•***First Born,*** collecting ***First Born #s 1-3*** and ***Witchblade #s 110-112,*** along with sketches and other bonus material;

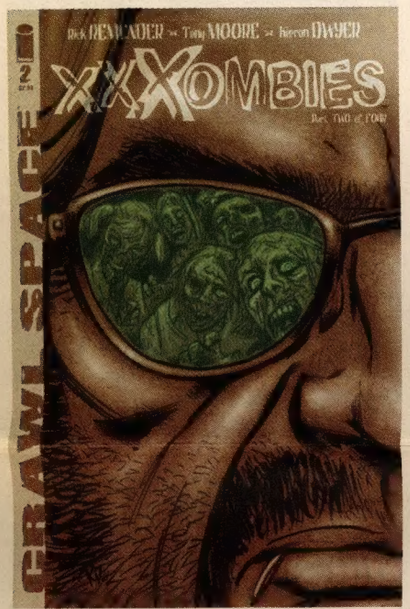
•***Repo,*** collecting the limited series b *Rick Spears & Rob G;*

•***Sorrow,*** collecting the limited series by *Rick Remender, Seth Peck, & Francesco Francavilla;*

•***Spawn: The Undead Collection,*** featuring "Japanese horror" style tales of the Spawn mythos by *Paul Jenkins & Dwayne Turner;*

•***Tellos Colossal Volume TP,*** a softcover edition of the deluxe *Todd Dezago-Mike Wieringo* fantasy collection; and

•***Witchblade Volume Three,*** collecting ***Witchblade #s 93-100*** and ***Witchblade: Bearers of the Blade.***



CSNsider

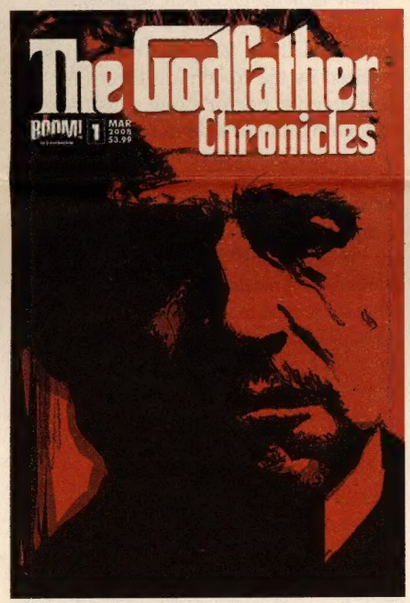
•Apparently there's still plenty of life in zombies! The second issue of ***Crawl Space: Xxxombies*** has sold out from Image Comics, and a second printing (featuring an all-new cover by series artist *Kieron Dwyer)* should be in comic shops this week or next. "Crawl Space is a dream project for me and Rick, so it's definitely very gratifying that people are digging the series launch so much," Dwyer said. "We had such a ball making the ***XXXombies*** arc, we're really glad to know that others are enjoying it too."

"I'm glad the response for the book has been so strong," writer *Rick Remender* added. "When we saw the orders for #3 and #4 go up we knew the book had found it's audience. Working with Kieron Dwyer and Tony Moore is always a joy and the sales on this mean Kieron and I will be able to produce ***Crawl Space*** together for years to come."

•***X-Factor #26,*** the seventh chapter of the ***Messiah Complex*** story arc, has sold out; the book will go back to press, with *Scot Eaton* pickup art from the book's interior featured on the cover. This marks the seventh straight ***Messiah CompleX*** sellout/reprinting (And while no announcement has been made at press-time, we can report that ***Messiah CompleX*** chapter 8, ***New X-Men #45,*** has also sold out—and that most likely means yet another second printing).

"I am so proud that ***Messiah CompleX*** is doing so well," editor *Nick Lowe* said. "The writers and artists have put in so much work to knock your socks off and it seems to be working (though I hope your feet don't get cold). Trust me when I say, the best is yet to come!"

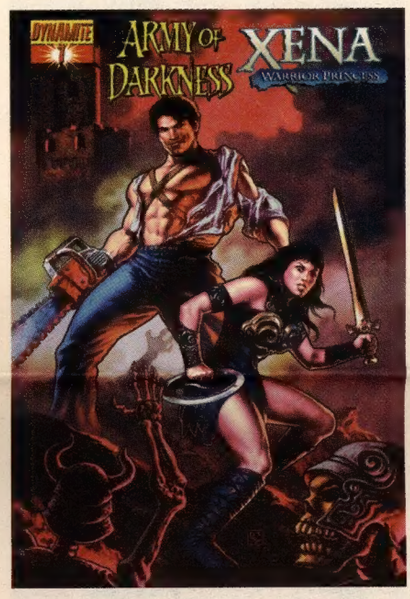
In announcing the sellout, Marvel tossed in one intriguing hitherto-unrevealed X-news tidbit: there's a new X-title coming up that hasn't been announced until now! "With new titles launching out of this event such as ***X-Force, Cable, X-Men: Legacy,*** and ***Young X-Men,***" Marvel's Senior VP of sales and circulation *David Gabriel* said, "as well as saying good bye to some old favorites, we'll have an entirely new invigorated X line up for 2008!" This is the first mention of ***Young X-Men;*** as more info is revealed, you'll read about it here in ***CSN!***



•Just when you thought they were out of the spotlight, Boom Studios is drawing them back in... the Corleone Family returns in March in ***The Godfather Chronicles,*** an original series of story arcs that complement the unforgettable film.s The first issue launches a five-part arc by *Mark Waid & Greg Scott* that chronicles the untold battle between Do Vito Corleone and Al Capone for control of New York's underworld. *Bill Sienkiewicz & Tim Sale* supply the 50:50 variant covers.

•*Warren Ellis* revisits the world of combat magician William Gravel in the eponymous ***Gravel,*** an ongoing full-color monthly series from Avatar. Everyone thought the star of ***Strange Kiss*** and ***Strange Killings*** was dead, including the Minor Seven, the secret enclave of Britain's Occult Detectives. But Combat Magician William Gravel is very much alive and looking for the answers to how and why his place in the Minor Seven was filled by another and what the secret society is doing with the Sigsand Manuscript, an ancient supernatural text of unparalleled power. Look for it in March.

•Jackie Estacado faces off against the daughter of Dracula in the Dynamite miniseries ***The Darkness Vs. Eva,*** written by *Leah Moore & John Reppion* with art by *Edgar Salazar.* While Eva hunts the streets, slaying the undead and unclean among a marked increase in paranormal activity, Jackie Estacado is having a bit of a problem with both his Darkness and Darklings as strange new forces vie for control of the city— and its newly awakened supernatural presence...



•That's not the only crossover in the works from Dynamite in March; the publisher is also bringing Ash and Xena together in ***Army of Darkness/Xena: Why Not,*** a four-part limited series by *John Layman & Miguel Montenegro.* This book, described by Dynamite as an "unnecessary adventure," finds Ashley J. Williams transported to the world of Xena and Gabrielle—and most importantly, Autolycus, who bears more than a passing resemblance to our main man Ash. Throw in the Necronomicon, and an evil little Ash taking charge of a group of fairies (the winged kind), and you've got yourselves a truly unpredictable story!

•*Terry Moore,* whose brilliant ***Strangers in Paradise*** ranks right up there with ***Sandman*** as one of the field's finest long-form series, returns to comics in March with his new project, ***Terry Moore's Echo.*** The drama begins when Julie Martin witnesses a massive explosion in the desert—an explosion that covers her in bizarre metallic fallout. She heads home, only to discover that some of the alien metal has attached itself to her skin—and now she is the reluctant host to a symbiotic living bomb that has attached itself to her! First printings of the new full-color first issue will feature a special silver-embossed cover.

•The good news is that Archie Comics is releasing a new ***Adventures of Little Archie*** collected edition in March; the *great* news is that it will feature an all-new twenty-two-page Little Archie tale by *Bob Bolling,* who is to the young Archie what *Carl Barks* is to Uncle Scrooge. In the new tale, "Dragon of Doom," Mad Doctor Doom (yes, Little Archie has his very own Doctor Doom!) and Chester are back in action, this time using a dragon fly to steal armored cars—and it's up to Archie, Chic, and Kimberly to stop them! In addition to this original tale, ***The Adventures of Little Archie Volume Two*** will feature more than seventy pages of classic reprints.

•Devil's Due has brought readers new adventures of the jungle heroine Sheena—and in March, they're going to offer readers an opportunity to enjoy some of her classic Golden Age tales! ***Golden Age Sheena: The Best of the Queen of the Jungle*** is a hefty digitally-remastered trade paperback featuring tales from the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, produced by the Eisner/Iger Studios and others.

•*Peter David,* creator of the first ***Star Trek*** crew designed exclusively for print, continues the exploits of this crew in IDW's ***Star Trek: The New Frontier #1,*** illustrated by *Stephen Thompson.* IDW's *Chris Ryall* describes this as the first book of IDW's "***Star Trek: Second Stage*** lineup, featuring some of the top ***Star Trek*** creators in comics, books and television." Look for the premiere issue in March.'

•***The Ghost Whisperer,*** the occult human interest drama starring *Jennifer Love Hewitt,* makes the jump from the tube to the comic shop in March, cour-

tesy of IDW, with an assist from tv show writers *Carrie Smith & Becca Smith* and artist *Elena Casagrande.* (Alas, there's no truth to the rumors of a *Medium* comic book series from IDW...)

•Last month, CSN told you about *John Byrne's* first-ever ***Star Trek*** tale produced for IDW; this month, we can tell you that Byrne has signed on to supply art for a new IDW series, ***FX,*** debuting in March. Written by *Wayne Osborne,* this six-parter introduces a new hero. Struck down by a mysterious accident, Tom Talbot awakens to find that playing pretend has suddenly become all *too real. He now has power limited* only by his imagination—but will it be enough to stop the savage Silverback?

•The folks who brought you ***Action Philosophers*** turn their attention to comics history in Evil Twin's ***Comic Book Comic #1,*** debuting in March from Evil Twin Comics. The first issue by *Fred Van Lente & Ryan Dunlavey* takes readers back into comic book prehistory with a look at the comic strip war between newspaper publishers *William Randolph Hearst* and *Joseph Pulitzer.* Other stories spotlight the struggle between *Walt Disney* and *Max Fleischer* for animation domination; the circuitous journey of *Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster* from fanzine creators to pioneers of the comic book; and a look at the early years of *Jack Kirby, Will Eisner, Winsor McCay, & Joe Simon.*

•*Mike Allred* gets his moment in the spotlight with the March release of TwoMorrows' ***Modern Masters Volume Sixteen: Mike Allred.*** This 120-page book features a profusely-illustrated career-encompassing interview with Allred, a full color section spotlighting the exquisite coloring of Mike's wife and partner *Laura Allred,* a lengthy art gallery, and tons of rare and unpublished art.

•Last week, IDW editor-in-chief & publisher *Chris Ryall* mentioned that *Tony Lee* would be working on a ***Doctor Who*** project for the publisher. So what's the scoop? Lee is keeping details mum for now, but he *did* reveal that "it's coming out around April or May; it's a six-parter called ***Doctor Who: The Forgotten*** and it stars *more* than one Doctor!" So which other Doctor(s) might appear? Lee's keeping that a secret... but we're going to keep working on him for more info!

•More of *Ben Templesmith's* adventures of the Gentleman Corpse are collected in ***Wormwood Volume Two: "It Only Hurts When I Pee..." TP,*** which includes ***Wormwood #s 5-7*** along with a ***Wormwood*** oneshot.

•Top Shelf Productions plays a role in an international event with the release of ***Hieronymus B.,*** an original graphic novel by *Ulf K* that sees simultaneous release from five international publishers in March. Ulf. K. The winner of the Max and Moritz Prize for Best Cartoonist at the International Comic Salon in Erlangen, This graphic novel introduces American readers to the loveable and humble clerk, Hieronymus B.

•The modern-day Titans are the focus of ***The Titans Companion Volume Two,*** a 224-page volume from TwoMorrows. The book features interviews with *Geoff Johns, Mike McKone, Peter David, Phil Jimenez,* and others, along with art by *Neal Adams, John Byrne, Phil Jimenez, Mike McKone, George Pérez,* and many more; look for it in late March.

•Acclaimed illustrator *J. Allen St. John,* best known to fantasy fans for his illustrations that accompanied the tales of *Edgar Rice Burroughs,* is the focus of Vanguard's ***The Paintings of J. Allen St. John: Grand Master of Fantasy.*** Just how important is St. John? Well, he's the man whose work inspired the art of *Roy Krenkel, Frank Frazetta,* and *Jeff Jones,* among others!

•*Roy Thomas* spotlights the career of one of comics' most influential living legends in ***Alter Ego #76,*** a special *Joe Simon* issue. In a lengthy interview conducted by *Jim Amash,* Simon looks back at the creation of Captain America, Fighting American, Stuntman, Adventures of the Fly, Sick Magazine, and more; the issue includes art by *Jack Kirby, Bob Powell, Al Williamson,* and others.

•*Dennis O'Neil,* who knows as much about the Dark Knight as any living man, shares some of his knowledge in ***Batman Unauthorized: Vigilantes, Jokers, & Heroes,*** a collection of essays exploring Batman's motivations and actions, answering such questions as "Why is the Joker so good at pushing Batman's buttons" and "Why is Batman the perfect, iconic American hero?" Look for it in March.

•Zenescope Entertainment has landed the comic book rights to novelist *Michael Marshall's* ***The Straw Men,*** and will adapt it as a comic book series as well as a graphic novel. The story follows Ward Hopkins, a seemingly average man with a past so secret that not even he knows about it. After a string of tragedies and murders, Hopkins begins to uncover a horrifying truth -- each event is related... and he has a direct link to those responsible. As he investigates his own past, Hopkins realizes that he must eventually come face to face with a terrifying network of killers and stop their murderous scheme. Eisner-nominated artist *Brett Weldele* provides the artwork for the series; look for the first issue (which will feature a full thirty pages of story for only $2.99) in June.

•What's ***Cerebus*** creator *Dave Sim* working on? He's not saying... yet. However, he *is* referring to his next big thing as "Secret Project II," and he indicates that everyone will learn all about it in late January or early February—and once Sim reveals the details, you'll hear about it in ***CSN!***

•The sold-out ***World of Warcraft #1*** is slated to return to comic shops at about the same time as this issue of ***CSN.*** "From how quickly the first printing sold out, it's clear that comics fans and World of Warcraft players are also liking what they're seeing," *Chris Metzen,* vice president of creative development at Blizzard Entertainment, said. The second printing is sure to make those fans even happier, since it'll feature a black and white version of *Jim Lee's* cover art.

•Just as we first mentioned two weeks ago, DC has indeed sent ***Freddy Vs. Jason Vs. Ash #1*** back to press for a second printing; this edition, slated to be in comic shops next week, will feature the *J. Scott Campbell* cover art that was broken into triptych covers for the first printing. "Four years ago this story was collecting dust in my desk drawer, the product of a failed movie deal and likely to never see the light of day," co-writer *Jeff Katz* said. "To be here now and see it both published and embraced by the fans in such a massive way has been a real thrill... I'm honored to have been a part of it."

•Wondering what happened to that ***Veronica Mars*** comic that TV series *Rob Thomas* was reportedly working on? Well, according to a piece on TVGuide.com, the comic is still in the works, but the Writer's Guild has asked TV writers to refrain from working on TV-based comics during the strike if it might promote a network property. Does that still apply if the property in question is a cancelled series? Could be, since a major point of dispute that led to the strike involves DVD royalties, and all three seasons of ***Veronica Mars*** are available on DVD.

•Virgin Comics continues to expand both its publishing line and its staff; the latest addition to the latter is *Neil Marks,* who has been named marketing director for Virgin. ""Neil played a key role in the growth of the Comedy Central brand, and I know he'll bring the same creativity and expertise to Virgin Comics," Virgin chief marketing officer *Larry Lieberman* said.

•*Pat Broderick,* veteran comics illustrator who has worked for Marvel, DC, Tekno, and others, joined Visionary Comics Studio, which is also home to *Brian Augustyn, Lou Manna, Dave Lanphear,* and others. The first project he is developing with Visionary is the post-apocalyptic series ***T-Rex.***

Broderick, who returns to comics after several years in advertising and videogame design, explained why he came back. "I've missed comics intensely over the past few years, even though I've worked on some of the top advertising accounts and a couple of animation projects... During this time I developed a few properties of my own to satisfy that need. ***T-Rex*** is the first of those properties to be released. The industry today is different. It has become stronger and more diversified. I understand that one must also change with it. After finding Visionary I felt that this promising young company could be the perfect starting point..."

T-Rex, a post-apocalyptic adventure starring a hard-nosed former dog soldier and his cybernetically-connected dog, should be signed with a publisher in the near future—and when it is, ***CSN*** will tell you all about it!

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